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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 15, 2012

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

It is my understanding that late last year the Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration approved a transfer of departure and arrival slots between US Airways and Delta Airlines at Reagan National Airport and LaGuardia National Airport. This waiver was granted by DOT with the understanding and belief that the proposal would, according to an October 3 notice in the Federal Register, "expand competition and capacity, and preserve and enhance small community access at both LGA and DCA."

Yet, it has recently come to my attention that later this year the James A. Cox International Airport in Dayton, Ohio will lose direct flight service to LaGuardia; instead flyers from Dayton will be redirected to John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. I would ask that in the spirit of the waiver request granted to the airlines, that you work with all stakeholders to ensure that the Dayton Airport maintains a direct flight to LaGuardia.

Currently, US Airways provides three daily flights to LaGuardia that are, on average, 74% full. Without this service to LaGuardia, Dayton companies and businesses stand at a distinct disadvantage as it will be harder to reach the central business district in New York City. As you well know, limiting non-stop flights hampers economic growth and could significantly damage the Dayton business community's competitiveness with other cities that have direct access to this international business hub.

The last decade has proven difficult for commercial aviation, yet we must continue to work to ensure that consumers and businesses have access to flights that promote regional economic growth. DOT approved this deal because of assurances that existing service would be enhanced, not eliminated. The Dayton community believes that their access to New York City has been hindered. DOT must hold the airlines to their word – service should be enhanced not eliminated. I appreciate your attention to this critical issue to the Dayton community and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator